

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TOKYO 05200 080959Z

20

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01

OMB-01 CU-02 /060 W

----- 108927

R 080845Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8337

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CONFIDENTIAL TOKYO 5200

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, TH, JA

SUBJ: JAPANESE REACTION TO THAI ELECTIONS

SUMMARY: FOLLOWING THAI POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS WITH STRONG INTEREST, JAPANESE FONOFF AND MEDIA CONCLUDE THAI ELECTIONS MOVED BANGKOK TO MORE CONSERVATIVE AND MORE "THAI" POLITICAL CONSENSUS. CONSOLIDATION TOWARD FEWER POLITICAL PARTIES IS REGARDED AS HEALTHY FOR THAILAND'S FRAGILE DEMOCRACY. DEFEAT OF FORMER PM KUKRIT, WHO WAS RESPECTED IN JAPAN FOR ADROITLY MANEUVERING THAILAND DURING A CRUCIAL PERIOD, IS THOUGHT TO HAVE RESULTED FROM HIS DECISION US BASES. SYMPATHY IS WIDESPREAD FOR THAI DILEMMA OF ACCOMODATING HANOI'S DEMANDS AND GUARANTEEING THAI NATIONAL SECURITY. END SUMMARY.

1. MOST JAPANESE OBSERVERS SAW THAI ELECTIONS AS VICTORY FOR CONSERVATIVES AND MOVE TOWARD CENTER/RIGHT IN BANGKOK. DEFEAT OF FORMER PM KUKRIT, WHO HAD GAINED RESPECT OF JAPANESE, IS REGRETTED AND SEEN AS PART OF REVERSAL OF GENERAL TURN LEFTWARD WHICH CHARACTERIZED

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TOKYO 05200 080959Z

POLITICAL MOVEMENT IN THAILAND AFTER CAPTURE OF

INDOCHINA BY COMMUNISTS. FONOFF FIRST SE ASIA DEPDIVDIR TSUKADA PROVIDED US FONOFF ASSESSMENT. FONOFF CORRECTLY PREDICTED COALESCING TOWARD HANDFUL OF MAJOR PARTIES AND WAS NOT SURPRISED THAT DEMOCRATIC PARTY ACHIEVED PREDOMINANCE. DEFEAT OF KUKRIT WAS A SURPRISE EVEN THOUGH THAT POSSIBILITY EXISTED. DECISION ON US BASES IS THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN THE MAJOR FACTOR IN KUKRIT'S DEFEAT. IN LONG RUN, MOVEMENT TOWARD FEWER POLITICAL PARTIES SHOULD PROVIDE THAILAND GREATER POLITICAL STABILITY, BUT, IN FONOFF ASSESSMENT, SUBSTANTIAL POLITICAL INSTABILITY WILL CONTINUE TO CHARACTERIZE THE SITUATION IN THAILAND FOR AT LEAST MANY MONTHS. ELECTION RESULTS AND PROBABLE COMPOSITION OF NEW GOVERNMENT SHOULD PLEASE MILITARY WHERE GREATEST CONCERN ABOUT KUKRIT GOVERNMENT EXISTED. DISCONTENT AMONG LEFTISTS FORCES AND STUDENTS, HOWEVER, WILL PRESUMABLY INCREASE.

2. OVERALL DURING PAST YEAR, A DELICATE SHIFT HAS TRANSPired IN SENTIMENT AMONG THAI. RELATIONS WITH PEKING ARE NOW A SOURCE OF SATISFACTION TO BANGKOK BUT HOSTILITY IN HANOI AND VIENTIANE IN SPITE OF GOOD THAI INTENTIONS HAS LEFT THAIS SOBERED AND BEFuddled. AMBIVALANCE TOWARD TERMINATION OF US MILITARY PRESENCE AND BASES REFLECTS THIS CONFUSION.

3. ALTHOUGH SENI, WHO WILL PRESUMABLY BE PM, ADVOCATED LAST YEAR REMOVAL OF US BASES FROM THAILAND, THE SHIFT TOWARD A MORE CONSERVATIVE CONSENSUS IN THAILAND HAS CLEARLY ALSO AFFECTED SENI'S THINKING. FONOFF THINKS NEW RTG MAY WELL SEEK RENEGOTIATION ON BASES. US IS NOT EXPECTED TO RE-OPEN BASE ISSUE WITH HE THAIS, HOWEVER. IN ANY CASE, NEW GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE CLOSER TO THE US. JAPAN WILL CONTINUE TO TRY TO SUPPORT THAILAND, BOTH BILATERALLY AND THROUGH ASEAN.

4. JAPANESE INTEREST IN THAI DEVELOPMENTS AND THE ELECTION HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLE. TSUKADA SAID PM MIKI'S PRIVATE SECRETARY CONTACTED THE FONOFF AS SOON AS IT OPENED MONDAY SEEKING AN "SINSTANT ANALYSIS." MEDIA CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TOKYO 05200 080959Z

LIKEWISE HAS WATCHED THE ELECTION CLOSELY AND ALL MAJOR PAPERS DEVOTED EDITORIALS TO THE SUBJECT. PRESS FOLLOWED FONOFF LEAD IN ITS ASSESSMENT THAT LEFT HAD LOST AS THAILAND MOVED TO MORE CONSERVATIVE POSITION. SEVERAL PAPERS ANTICIPATED A REOPENING OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE US ON BASES. MAINICHI EXPRESSED VIEW THAT BECAUSE OF LEFT-CONSERVATIVE POLARIZATION, POLITICAL INSTABILITY WOULD CONTINUE.

MEDIA WAS SYMPATHETIC TO THAI DILEMMA OF ACCOMMODATING HANOI'S DEMANDS WHILE NOT THREATENING THAILAND'S NATIONAL SECURITY. DAILY YOMIURI, UNUSUALLY, CAUTIONED THAT IF THE RTG WENT TOO FAR IN MEETING THAI MILITARY DESIRE TO RETAIN US MILITARY PRESENCE AND BY POLICING DISSIDENTS LEFTISTS WOULD GO UNDERGROUND AND POSE A MORE SERIOUS LONG-TERM DANGER TO THAILAND. TENOR OF MOST EDITORIALS, THOUGH, AND FONOFF VIEW WAS THAT ELECTIONS WERE A SUCCESSFUL MILESTONE TOWARD DEFINING THAI NATIONAL INTERESTS AND REQUIREMENTS IN THE NEW SE ASIAN CONTEXT.

HODGSON

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptoning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** ELECTION RESULTS, FORM OF GOVERNMENT, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 08 APR 1976  
**Decapton Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decapton Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** izenbei0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976TOKYO05200  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760132-1117  
**From:** TOKYO  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760481/aaaacqxy.tel  
**Line Count:** 127  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** izenbei0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 21 MAY 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <21 MAY 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <20 SEP 2004 by izenbei0>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** JAPANESE REACTION TO THAI ELECTIONS SUMMARY: FOLLOWING THAI POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS WITH  
**TAGS:** PFOR, PGOV, TH, JA  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006